



PARTNERSHIP TO FIGHT  
CHRONIC DISEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact: Karen Gutmann, PFCD  
803-474-3703**

**Contact: Curry Hagerty, HSC  
803-737-4772**

## **FIRST LADY JENNY SANFORD JOINS FAST-GROWING NATIONAL HEALTH CARE INITIATIVE: PARTNERSHIP TO FIGHT CHRONIC DISEASE**

*Healthy South Carolina Challenge and Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease join forces against the number one cause of death and the biggest driver of health care costs in the U.S.*

CHARLESTON – August 31 – South Carolina’s First Lady, Jenny Sanford, announced today that her Healthy South Carolina Challenge has joined the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease in its efforts to spotlight chronic disease prevention as a necessary and central component of U.S and state health care policy. Mrs. Sanford will also serve on the organization’s South Carolina advisory board.

“The Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease is thrilled to welcome Mrs. Sanford and the Healthy South Carolina Challenge to our coalition,” said John Robitscher, Executive Director of the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) and PFCD Advisory Board member. “Mrs. Sanford’s Healthy South Carolina Challenge has long promoted some of the most critical goals of the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease: enhancing health information and promoting health and wellness.”

Roper St. Francis Healthcare, itself a partner in the coalition, hosted the announcement at its new Heart and Vascular Tower in downtown Charleston.

The Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease (PFCD) recently launched nationally and in the three key states of South Carolina, Iowa and New Hampshire. Since launching in May, the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease has garnered the support and partnership of more than 75 national organizations with an additional 70 in South Carolina alone. Healthy South Carolina Challenge will be part a broad-based coalition dedicated to the goal of fighting the number one cause of death and the single biggest driver of health care costs in the country: chronic disease.

“Seven out of 10 deaths in the United States are due to chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and cancer, and the tragedy is that much of that is preventable,” said Mrs. Sanford. “I am happy to be part of an organization that is challenging our citizens and our policy makers to reduce or eliminate such a terrible disease burden—not to mention the staggering cost burden—on our families and on our health care system. It is all too clear that our culture needs to change—and we



can do so by eating healthy, exercising regularly and not smoking. Evidently, we are not doing enough.”

Healthy South Carolina Challenge is a results-oriented initiative designed to motivate and inform South Carolinians to make choices to improve health and well-being. By encouraging increased physical activity, healthy food choices and smoking cessation, and providing information and tools necessary to make better choices, the Healthy South Carolina Challenge reflects the PFCD goal of focusing on preventive measures to reduce the incidence of debilitating chronic diseases.

“We don’t have a health care system; we have a sick care system,” said Robitscher. “I’ve been doing this for 25 years and this is the first time I’ve seen so wide a coalition agree with each other on a health care issue. The only long-term solution to our health care crisis is to work together to prevent many of these chronic diseases in the first place.”

### **About the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease**

The **Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease** (PFCD) is a national bipartisan coalition of patients, providers, community organizations, business and labor groups, and health policy experts committed to raising awareness of the number one cause of death, disability, and rising health care costs in the U.S.: chronic disease.

The PFCD’s mission is to:

- **Challenge** policymakers – in particular, the 2008 presidential candidates – to make the issue of chronic disease a top priority and articulate how they will address the issue through their health care proposals
- **Educate** the public about chronic disease and potential solutions for individuals, communities, and the nation
- **Mobilize** Americans to call for change in how policymakers, governments, employers, health institutions, and other entities approach chronic disease

Leaders in the effort represent more than 75 leading organizations from across health care, business and labor including Aetna, American Academy of Family Physicians, Alliance for Aging Research, American Academy of Physician Assistants, American College of Nurse Practitioners, American College of Preventive Medicine, American Hospital Association, American Pharmacists Association Foundation, Disease Management Association of America, Kerr Drug, Integrated Benefits Institute, International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association, NAACP, Milken Institute, National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations, National Association of Manufacturers, National Medical Association, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, Service Employees International Union, Sheet Metal Workers International Association, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and YMCA of the USA, among others.

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